

AN OVERVIEW OF WOMEN

IN

***GRENADA,
CARRIACOU AND
PETIT MARTINIQUE***

A REVIEW OF RESEARCH 1975-1990

DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

ST. GEORGES, GRENADA, WEST INDIES

RCH 1991

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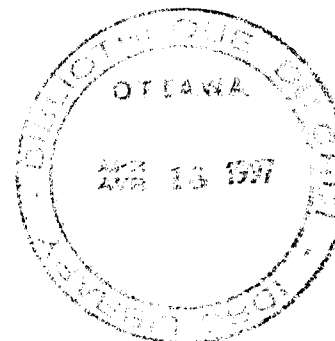
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MARCH 1991

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	
* Research On Women in Grenada	1
* A Profile of Women in Grenada	7
II. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY	9
III. THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN	22
IV. WOMEN'S ACCESS TO AND USE OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND RESOURCES	30
V. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES	34
VI. EQUALITY AND RIGHTS OF WOMEN	40
VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	49
REFERENCES	53

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

If there is to be a better understanding and greater appreciation of women's role in national development and of how they contribute to and benefit from this process, the population as a whole and women themselves need to know more about and to gain deeper insights into all aspects of women's life and work, about women's reality and about how and why it differs from that of men.

This information can only be generated by means of research and the insights can only be arrived at by systematic analysis of information provided by women. Research about women conducted by women does not only generate information about their lives, but provides them with opportunities to express their views and opinions and to articulate their concerns, problems and needs.

RESEARCH ON WOMEN IN GRENADA

An adequate data base on women is essential if their actual rather than stereotyped roles are to be recognized. Although some research has been carried out on women in Grenada, there is still only a limited amount of concrete data on specific aspects of the lives of Grenadian women, on their status and problems, on their participation in and contributions to national development, or about their concerns, problems and needs. On the other hand, although the data base is thin, it is important to ask what use is being made of the little data that is available.

Research on the Status of Women in Grenada (1975)

In 1975, International Women's Year, the National Commission on the Status of Women carried out a series of research studies "to determine the present status of women in Grenada".¹ Five (5) sub-committees appointed by the Commission carried out research on:-

- 1. The Legal Status of Women in Grenada.*
- 2. Health, Housing and Social Conditions of Women.*
- 3. Recreational Facilities Available for Women.*
- 4. Training and Employment.*
- 5. Educational Facilities Available to Girls in Grenada.*

The research findings were very revealing. They clearly showed the extent to which Grenadian women were discriminated against, because although the Laws of Grenada prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex it was found that several discriminatory practices not only existed, but were perpetuated. For example, married

¹Report on the Status of Women in Grenada (1975), pg. 36

women were classified as "incapacitated persons", there was discrimination in Income Tax, Child Custody and Maintenance, and no legislation on the family. In addition, up to that time the Government in Grenada had not ratified nine (9) of the International Conventions relating to the status of women.

In terms of women's health, the research revealed the existence of child malnutrition, domestic violence, rape and wife beating and pointed out that the physical and emotional anguish and trauma that women suffer as a result seriously affect their health and well being. The provision of adequate health services and the proper consideration of women's health are of critical importance for ensuring the existence of a healthy population and for the development of a healthy and prosperous nation. Furthermore, although women's involvement in recreational activities may be seen by many to be a luxury, it is in fact a necessity if they are to attain and maintain good physical and mental health. But the research indicated that the existing recreational facilities were inadequate to meet the needs of the adult female population.

In the area of training and employment the research revealed that there was "gross discrimination". For example, there were few opportunities for women to acquire proper training. Overseas training for women was virtually nil, and the local training that was available was both inadequate and unsuitable. It neither met the needs of individual women or of the country, and neither did it respond to the demands of the time. At the same time, it was clear that Grenadian women were not sufficiently exposed to a wide

range of jobs and career options and that where they were employed, existing prejudice and discrimination often inhibited their performance or prevented them from rising to senior management and decision making positions. For example, only 20% of the head teachers in Primary Schools were women and there were no female head teachers in any Government All Age School, this, in a profession in which there are usually many more women than men. In light of these findings, the Commission recognised that there was a need for positive measures to ensure women's rights to full employment. It pointed out however, that such measures must take into consideration women's multiple roles and responsibilities as mothers, housewives, subsistence farmers, workers and employees; and must set a market value on women's work in the reproduction and maintenance of the labour force, i.e., Grenadian families. They must also attempt to deal with the psychological and social factors that reinforce and perpetuate the prejudices that prevent women from entering certain professions and from rising to middle and senior level positions of management and decision making.

The Commission in its report also pointed out the vast potential that education has for the development of the nation, but its research showed that there were several obstacles that limited women's access to education. Among these were the traditional attitudes and practices of parents, schools, and educational institutions; insufficient or too much education of a poor quality that is unable to prepare girls for their rightful place in the society, a curriculum that limits girls' access to "male" subjects, e.g., science, and that reinforces sex stereotyping and discrimination; and poorer and more inadequate

facilities and equipment in girls' schools than in boys' schools. For example, there were more graduate teachers on the staff of boys' schools.

Given these findings, the National Commission made a number of specific and concrete recommendations which, if implemented would help improve the position and raise the status of Grenadian women. Many of their recommendations are still relevant today.

Other Research on Women in Grenada

During the last ten years (1980-1990), there has been a number of research studies undertaken at the regional and national level that have generated data on some aspects of the lives of Grenadian women. Among these are:-

- * A UN/CEPAL Study on THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE IN THREE CARIBBEAN STATES: Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, 1983.*
- * A Study on ATTITUDES TOWARDS NON-TRADITIONAL WORK AMONG GRENADIAN WOMEN. Women's Affairs Division, 1986.*
- * A Study on THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING - part of a larger CARICOM Study on Technical and Vocational Education in the Caribbean, 1987.*

- * *An ECLAC Study on EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES AND WOMEN IN THE CARIBBEAN, 1989.*
- * *A SURVEY ON WOMEN IN INDUSTRIAL PARKS. Women's Affairs Division, 1989.*
- * *An ECLAC Study on THE AGRICULTURAL TRADERS OF ST. VINCENT, GRENADA, DOMINICA AND ST. LUCIA, 1990.*
- * *A HOUSEHOLD SURVEY, 1990 - The first part of a larger research project on the Status of Women in Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique, 1990-1993. Department of Women's Affairs.*

In addition to these, the National Census of 1981 and the Labour Force Survey 1988 both contain statistical data which can be used to develop a general profile of women in Grenada.

All of these research studies have been used to build up a picture of the position and status of Grenadian women, to highlight some of their concerns, problems and needs, and to draw attention to some of the issues that must be addressed if women in Grenada are to contribute to and benefit from national development equally with their male counterparts.

A PROFILE OF WOMEN IN GRENADA

According to the last Census (1981), Grenada had a total population of 89,088 persons. Of these, 48.2% were male and 51.8% were women. The bulk of the population is very young with nearly three quarters (73.3%) being under 35 years of age, more than half (51.7%) under 19 years, and more than a quarter (27.7%) under 9 years.

About a quarter of the population were either married, widowed, divorced or legally separated, but there were three times as many widows as widowers. There is a tendency for people to marry at an older rather than a younger age - women at around 27 years and men at about 25 years. Fertility rates are highest among women between the ages of 20-24 (924 or 35.3% of all births in 1981), and next highest among women 15-19 years (692 or 26.47% of all births in 1981).

There are 21,017 households in Grenada, 54.7% of these are headed by men and 45.2% are headed by women. Just under half (44.7%) of the female heads of household are economically active, the rest (55.3%) are unemployed. The unemployment rate is 28%, but nearly twice as many women (63%) are unemployed as are men (36.9%). Sixty two percent (62%) of the unemployed women are between 15-19 years of age, and a large number of unemployed women are of child bearing age.

The majority of the population 15 years and over has only had a primary education but more girls attend school for longer periods than do boys. More females (13.6%) than males (11.3%) had a secondary education, and in the age group 20-24 years while 32% of the females had secondary education as compared to only 23% of the males.

Eighty seven percent (87%) of the adult population has never passed an examination, 3.5% had a School Leaving Certificate, but whereas 1.3% of the men had a degree only 0.4% of the women had degrees. This suggests that although more women than men reach and attain secondary level education, fewer women than men go on to tertiary level and higher education.

In the area of Technical and Vocational Training in 1981, only 12% of adult men and 11% of adult women had, or were receiving any vocational training and this was in traditional gender specific areas. For example, while 37.2% of women had been trained as typists, 23.1% of the men were in the protective services and 11.5% had trained as machine fitters. It is interesting to note however, that between 1970-1981 there was an increase in the number and type of training programmes available to women.

CHAPTER II: WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

The women of Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique make a significant contribution to the national economy and to the economic development of their country, but as in most countries their contribution is not fully recognised, is underestimated and under-valued. This is so because while the contribution of women engaged in paid employment in the formal sector and in the mainstream of the economy is recorded in official statistics and reports, the wide range of economic activities in which the majority of women are engaged is not reflected in these official documents.

Women are directly engaged in economic activities to earn money as well as in other activities which are of important economic value to society. In the case of the former, large numbers of women are involved in the informal sector of the economy as petty traders, market vendors, traffickers, food processors, seamstresses, hairdressers, shop-keepers, craft workers, sellers of meals, jams and jellies, clothing, and in cottage industries. In the latter case, women's unpaid labour on the family farms or in the family business, as housewives and home makers, as providers of health care to the family, children and the elderly, and their service to the community, is of vital importance to the well being and development of the society as a whole. Unfortunately, none of these activities are valued in economic terms or recorded in the national official statistics. And yet if women were to stop these important economic related activities or to withhold these vital services, not only the family but the national economy and the economic development of the country would suffer serious and adverse effects.

The absence of adequate, realistic and reliable data on women's contribution to the economy is an obstacle to effective economic and development planning. Serious attempts must therefore be made to change both how women's economic activity is defined, and the way in which information on it is collected and recorded. For example, future Labour Force Surveys should include categories to cover unpaid family workers, subsistence workers, traffickers, and the many economic activities in the informal sector in which women are involved.

In planning for the next Labour Force Survey, if the new definition of "economically active population" adopted by ILO in 1982 in which anyone engaged in production of economic goods and services either for market or for household consumption is seen to be economically active is adopted, it would help to ensure that more women who are economically active are included, and that their contribution to the economy is better reflected in the national statistics.

Labour Force

From the recent Labour Force Survey conducted in 1988, it is possible to get a general picture and some indication of women's participation in the labour force, the rates of female employment and unemployment, a profile of female workers and of the areas of economic activity in which they are involved. The Survey, conducted with a sample of 1,000 households, had a very high response rate of 88% and therefore the results are representative of the entire country and have a high degree of reliability.

The labour force is comprised of 38,920 persons or 39.9% of the population. The table below shows that fewer women than men are in the labour force, and that there are nearly twice as many unemployed women (63%) as there are unemployed men (36.9%).

TABLE 1: COMPOSITION OF THE LABOUR FORCE

DETAILS OF LABOUR FORCE	TOTAL	MALE	%	FEMALE	%
<i>Labour Force</i>	38,920	20,016	51.4	18,904	48.6
<i>Employed Labour Force</i>	28,022	15,985	56.6	12,037	42.6
<i>Unemployed Labour Force</i>	10,898	4,031	36.9	6,867	63.0

Source: Grenada Labour Force Survey, Final Report, Ministry of Finance, 1988

Employment

About half of the employed women (53.1%) are working as production workers, labourers, sales and services workers. A small number (410 or 3.4%) are in professional or technical jobs, and an even smaller number (156 or 1.3%) are in administrative or management positions. Within various industrial/economic sectors, the majority of employed women, 344 (28.6%) are working in community, social and personal services, but less than 5% of employed women are working in transport, communication, mining and quarrying, electricity, gas and water, construction, finance, insurance or real estate. These sectors have traditionally been seen as "male" and have been dominated by men. However a significant number of women (3,280 or 27.2%) are involved in wholesale and retail trading, in restaurants and in hotels.

Among employed women, 3,114 (25.8%) are working in the civil service, and 1,640 (13.6%) are self-employed but only 417 (3.5%) as compared to 1,307 (8.1%) men, are employers.

From these figures, it is clear that the majority of women are employed either as unskilled, low-skilled or semi-skilled workers in traditional female jobs in the service sector, probably for very low wages.

Income/Wages

The average monthly household income is EC\$591.43, but while a male head of household earns \$670.22 per month, a female head of household earns \$497.80, nearly \$200.00 less than the male. This is significant given that 45.3% of all households are headed by women who are solely responsible for meeting the financial needs of their families. The table below gives an idea of wages that some female workers receive.

TABLE 2: EXAMPLES OF WAGES PAID TO WOMEN

JOB TITLE	AMOUNT PAID IN EC\$
Agricultural worker	\$13.50 per day
Road Worker	\$33.48 per day
Hotel - Waiter	\$313.30 per month
- Cook	\$712.80 per month
Cashier	\$432.00 - \$540.00 per month
Wearing Apparel - Garment Worker	\$10.80 - \$17.28 per day
- Supervisor	\$20.52 - \$22.68 per day
Domestic - Daily	\$270.00 - \$324.99 per month
- Sleep in	\$432.20 per month

Source: Export Processing Zones and Women in the Caribbean, ECLAC, 1989.

Unemployment

Just over twenty-eight percent (28%) of the labour force is unemployed and unemployment is highest among persons between 15-34 years. Moreover, although there is a larger number of women in the population, the unemployment rate among women is higher (36%) than among men (20%). Sixty-three percent (63%) of the unemployed female population are young women between 15-19 years, and 67.9% of all unemployed women are under 35 years. In addition, 58% of all unemployed women are heads of household. The fact that a large number of unemployed women are of child bearing age and that more than half are heads of household has serious implications because it affects their ability to support their children and to meet the financial needs of their families. At the same time the majority of persons expected to enter the labour force during 1988-1989 were women; and the majority of these indicated that they needed training in order to be able to get a job.

The majority of persons who were seeking employment expressed a preference for work in the clerical, sales and services sectors (60%), or in the trade and service industries (70%). Large numbers of women indicated a desire to work as service workers (1,751), clerical workers (1,251) and sales workers (306) but the number of men who indicated a wish to work in these areas were considerably smaller, being 167, 28, and 28 respectively. However, while only 139 men expressed a desire to be professional and technical workers, 455 women expressed a wish to be employed at this level. At the

same time a study on women's attitudes to non-traditional work carried out in 1986 among a sample of 350 women, revealed that while 97% of these women felt that women were capable of doing "men's work", 75% of them only had a primary education and lacked the training and skills that would give them access to employment opportunities in a wider range of job options and career choices, or in non-traditional areas.

A well educated and trained labour force will not only increase employment opportunities, but should ensure improvement in the quality of production and an increase in the level of productivity. Enough people with relevant and appropriate knowledge, skills and work attitudes is an essential ingredient for the growth of the national economy. Education and training of the work force on an on-going basis is therefore important and necessary. The level of education and training that workers have will influence and determine what jobs they are qualified for and equipped to do, as well as the competence with which they will be able to do them. In addition, education and training will help people to have access to information about job options, and will influence their aspirations and determine their career choices.

Data from the Labour Force Survey (1988) reveal that a quarter (25.9%) of the persons employed have less than eight years of schooling and that among employed persons, 73.2% of the men and 60.7% of the women had not passed any examination. In addition, more than two thirds (67.9%) of all employed persons had not obtained any academic certificates, and among this number there was a higher percentage of men

(73.2%) than there were women (60%). Within the labour force there are therefore more women with more academic qualifications than there are men. This is reflected in the distribution of employed persons by occupational groups in which there are significantly more women (1,418) than men (125) in professional and technical jobs that require higher levels of education and training. At the same time there are over twice as many men (361) as women (167) employed in administrative and managerial positions.

Given this situation, serious questions need to be asked not only about the type, amount and level of education required for various jobs and positions, especially at the upper end of the job scale, but about how men and women are recruited, selected and promoted to these positions. For example, what relative weight is given to education and training, experience, length of service, and how does this affect the employment of women and their career paths?

Among the unemployed, about three quarters had no academic certificate, 73% had eight years of schooling and only 20% had some type of training. Of those seeking employment, only 10% had any training and all of these were females. Thirty per cent (30%) - both male and female - of those seeking work expressed the need for training. Preference for a particular job is often linked and related to level of education and training. Among those persons seeking employment, 34.3% would like to become production workers, transport equipment operators and labourers and 26.5% would like to be service workers. Only 5% wanted to enter professional or technical occupations.

This suggests a fairly low level of job aspiration and career choice. In addition, unemployed women showed a preference for jobs in community, social and personal services - areas of traditional female roles and occupations.

It is clear from these figures that in order to adequately prepare women for participation in the labour force, more attention must be paid to the education and training they receive and in which they participate. Education must attempt to change perceptions about and attitudes towards the kind of jobs that women can do, and to increase women's awareness about a wider range of career options and occupations. There is also an urgent need to increase the level of basic and formal education of both women and men and to provide them with training in a wide range of technical and job related skills. Special efforts must be made to educate and train women for administrative and managerial positions and encourage and enable them to apply for and accept such positions. In addition, on-going Continuing Education and Training Programmes must be developed and designed so as to train and retain women and to equip them with the knowledge and skills required to fill jobs in a rapidly changing technological environment.

Women In Agriculture

Agriculture is a major source of income and of export earnings in Grenada. A significant number of women are involved in the agricultural sector either as food

producers; e.g. farmers, backyard gardeners; as farm workers, e.g. paid and unpaid labourers; in marketing of agricultural produce as market vendors and traffickers; and in agro-industries, e.g., preserving and processing food both for domestic consumption and for export.

According to the Agricultural Census of 1981, 38% of the registered farmers were women. A UN Study in 1983 revealed that 40% of persons employed in the spice industry were women; 50% of the members of the Grenada Farms Corporation and Productive Farmers Union were women, 50% of the 7,000 farmers in the Co-operative Nutmeg Association were women and 50% of registered producers in the Spice Co-operative Marketing Society were women.

In the Caribbean, marketing of agricultural produce is by and large carried out by women; and hucksters/traffickers are a major outlet for and network through which fruits and vegetables are moved and sold from country to country. A recent ECLAC Study (1990) on Agricultural Traders in the Windward Islands confirms that this inter island trade is dominated by women. Of the 59 Grenadian traders interviewed, 66.1% (39) were women and most of them were mothers over thirty years of age.

They work long and hard hours and experience several problems including problems with customs officials at home and abroad and an inadequate supply of produce from farmers. Only about a third of these women grow their own produce and

because of spoilage, theft, severe competition and insecure income, many find it difficult to cover their overhead costs. Moreover, most of them are unable to get credit or to obtain loans from the banks.

In 1987, the Department of Women's Affairs attempted to help the traders to organise themselves and to form an association through which they could begin to deal with some of their problems. Forty women and five men participated in an initial meeting at which a male trader was elected President and a Steering Committee was formed. However, it appears that nothing further has been done since then.

Over the last ten to fifteen years there have been some attempts to expose women to training in agriculture. For example, whereas between 1976-1982 only seven (7) Grenadian women as compared to thirty-five (35) men received overseas training in agriculture, between 1977-1982, forty-seven (47) women participated in training at the Mirabeau Farm School and just over a quarter of the agricultural extension workers were women.

Since women are playing such a vital role in the production and marketing of food it is important that more attention be paid to the conditions under which they work, the training that they need and receive, the resources that are necessary and that are available to them, and to the financial returns they get for their labour.

Women In Industry

In an attempt to create employment, to stimulate economic growth and to boost its economy Grenada, like many of its Caribbean counterparts, embarked on a path of industrialization. In many cases Free Trade Zones were established and industrial estates created to manufacture a wide range of products including electrical appliances, electronic devices, clothing, shoes, sporting goods and toys. Only limited skills are required for these operations and these were easily found among the large unskilled, semi-skilled and unemployed female population. Some employers in these industries not only deliberately set out to recruit women because they were a cheap source of labour, but because they believe that women work more steadily, are more responsive to discipline, and are more suited to monotonous routine work.

Women who work in the factories on the industrial estates are open to serious exploitation. They have no job security, they may be fired at any time, they are discouraged from forming or joining unions and they work under appalling conditions. Both an ECLAC Study and a Survey carried out on Women in Industrial Parks by the Department of Women's Affairs in 1989 reveal that the average length of employment for these women was just over one year, but that many women were often employed for a few weeks or months, and that wages were low. (Less than \$400.00 per month, and in some cases less than \$100.00 per month).

Although many women expressed dissatisfaction with these working conditions, low pay and poor facilities, e.g. ventilation and lighting, and health problems as a result of the latter, because unemployment is the alternative and because the majority are single parents, they are forced to accept the intolerable working conditions in order to meet their financial needs and to support their families.

Informal Economic Activities

Because of women's need to generate income to ensure the survival of their families, large numbers of women from all strata of the society are involved in a wide variety of economic activities either on a part or full-time basis. These are mainly informal sector activities and range from large scale buying, selling and trading, e.g., trafficking, to small scale production, e.g., dress making and food preservation and preparation of cakes, jams and jellies. Women are involved in these economic enterprises either as individuals or as a group, and the activity may be designed either to benefit individual women or entire communities.

During the last ten years a great deal of time and attention has been given to encouraging women to become involved in income earning activities and income generating projects. Several Non-Governmental Organisations like The Agency for Rural Development (ART), Grenada Save The Children Development Agency (GRENSAVE) and Grenada Community Development Agency (GRENCODA), that are involved in Community

Development work have developed and implemented a number of these activities and projects. Through their efforts a number of women have acquired and improved their skills in technical areas such as sewing or woodwork, in organisation and management of small micro-economic activities and projects and in setting up viable and successful small/micro-businesses.

However, few if any of these activities are recorded or reflected in the official statistics, little is known about how many and which women are engaged in them, about how much income is being generated, or about the size of these women's contribution to the overall economy.

What is known however, and what is now becoming much clearer is that the women who are involved in these small scale "informal" economic activities are not only ensuring the survival and maintenance of their families, but are making a significant and valuable contribution to the economy and to the economic development of the country.

CHAPTER III: THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN

Education is often seen as essential for, and as the key to individual, community and national development. All Caribbean Governments place a great deal of emphasis on education, and attempt to provide the citizens of their countries with a sound education. Consequently, efforts are constantly being made to update and upgrade the formal education systems in the region.

Unlike many other parts of the world, girls in the Caribbean are not prevented from going to school either because of cultural traditions or because of an insufficient number of school places. In fact girls not only have the same and equal opportunity and access to education as do boys, but they tend to go to school at an earlier age, stay in school longer, perform better, and attain higher levels of achievement than boys.

In spite of this, because of the existence of gender bias and sex stereotyping in the school curriculum, text-books and staffing arrangements, and because of well entrenched attitudes and expectations in the society about the "appropriate" roles for men and women, girls are often limited in their choice of subjects and forced to pursue studies in traditional female subjects like Home Economics, Sewing, Typing and English. This is true within the formal school system, in technical and vocational training programmes and in non-formal adult education programmes alike.

The Formal Education System

In 1981 the number of Grenadians attending school was 29,885 or about one third of the total population. Just over half of these (50.2%) were female. There were more boys (11,020) than girls (10,414) at primary school, but more girls (3,456) than boys (2,592) at secondary school, and more males (80) than females (11) at university. However there is a tendency for attendance to drop rapidly after age 14. According to the 1981 Census, by the age of 17 years only 38% of school age children were still attending school, and less than 15% went on to secondary school. More girls (435) remained at school for a longer period than did boys, and among the adult population 20-24 years of age, while only 23% of the men had a secondary education, 32% of the women did.

These figures show that the bulk of the adult population has had only a primary education, and that significant numbers of those who left school would have acquired only a limited amount of the knowledge and skills that they would need to be able to work and function as productive and useful adult members of the society. This has serious implications both for the development of individuals and for national development, and it may be necessary both to find out the reason for this trend and to take steps to reverse it.

In the case of women, it is significant to note that while there are many more women with secondary education so few of them go on to university, and that it is in the

age group 20-24 years where so many women have a secondary education, that so many more of them are unemployed than men of the same age. In this age group, 42% of women compared to 24.8% men are unemployed. This in a society in which formal secondary education is often one, if not the most important criteria for obtaining a job.

Technical And Vocational Education And Training

Because of gender bias the majority of girls and women continue to pursue training and to acquire "female skills" related to home-making, e.g. sewing, cooking, and very few girls even enroll in technical and vocational training institutes. For example, during the first 15 years of operation of the Technical Institute only 14 girls received training in what were considered male trades. Of these, six were trained in woodwork, three in machine operation, two each in motor mechanics and plumbing and one in welding. However, during the last 10 years there has emerged a greater recognition of the importance of providing girls and women, through alternative training programmes, with more choices and with opportunities to acquire new and a wider range of skills, and with on-the-job experience so that they might be better equipped to obtain employment in non-traditional areas.

As a result, within recent years several initiatives have been taken in an attempt to expose girls and women in Grenada to training in non-traditional skills and trade areas. Both Government and Non-Governmental Organisations have organised training

programmes and projects, the aim of which was to equip women with technical skills and to improve their chances of finding or creating employment and generating income through their involvement in non-traditional areas of work. In some cases attempts have also been made to train boys in traditional female areas. For example, in NEWLO's (New Life Organisation) training programmes for unskilled youth, all students must participate in a six-month orientation programme in which both boys and girls are exposed to all areas of training in sewing, cooking, carpentry, masonry and woodwork among other general subjects.

The first attempt to expose women to training in non-traditional skills was made by CANSAVE in 1980, when it sponsored a ten-month training course in woodwork for 11 young women and three young men. CANSAVE then helped this group to develop the St. Andrew's Woodwork Project in which they built and supplied furniture and toys to several pre-schools in the country.

Five years later in 1985, the Ministry of Education, with funding from UNESCO organised a Non-Formal Skills Training Project for unemployed young women (17-25 years) who had to drop out of school because of early pregnancy, poverty or other social problems. Seventeen (17) young women participated in the project. They acquired skills and gained experience in motor mechanics, refrigeration, pipe fitting, meter reading and water treatment by working for three months in local firms or business places. By the end of their training, 11 of them had gained employment and the six had organised a small cottage industry.

In 1986 the Women's Affairs Division in collaboration with the Ministry of Construction and Works organised a two year training course in Auto-Mechanics for women. Seventeen (17) women, the majority of whom were single parents between the ages of 20-23 years, participated in this training. Most of these women had some level of secondary education as well as some skills but had been unable to find employment. During the training they were exposed to theory in the classroom sessions and to practical work in the Central Garage of the Ministry, and through attachments to commercial garages as apprentices or employees. Twelve (12) of the trainees successfully completed the course and graduated with certificates. In another project - Women in Technical Trades - 14 young women received training in electrical installation, plumbing, refrigeration and drafting.

Two important features of all of the above training programmes were that they were all conducted outside of the formal school system, and that they included a component on Personal Development. In most cases, trainees indicated that the sessions on Personal Development were not only some of the most beneficial but were crucial in preparing and helping them to deal with the many problems they experienced during training, in finding jobs and in working in non-traditional male dominated occupations on completion of their training.

Women who dare to pursue training in technical skills and attempt to work in trades and jobs that are regarded as "male" areas experience many serious problems.

Among these are:-

- 1. Failure to find a job or employment in the particular field on completion of training. For example, one of the graduates of the two-year Auto Mechanics Course could only get a job as a "Typist/Clerk" - a traditional female job.*
- 2. Sexual harassment on the job.*
- 3. Ridicule from peers and from the public.*
- 4. Societal expectations and attitudes to male/female roles.*

Non-formal Adult Education

As a society develops and changes, its citizens need to acquire different and new types of knowledge and skills to enable them to perform different roles, to cope with and to manage change, to function in new situations, and to contribute to and to benefit from the on-going process of development. Adult and Continuing Education Programmes are therefore essential to the processes of personal and national development. In Grenada where such a large proportion of the adult population (over 80%) has only had a primary education and where significant numbers have left or dropped out of school during their

early teens, the provision of opportunities for adults to continue their education is critical. Moreover, because it is almost certain that many who leave primary school do not or will not participate in any organised education programme, they will lose some of the basic skills that they had acquired in school, and their level of literacy will lapse. It is important therefore, that literacy programmes be organised to ensure that members of the population, acquire and maintain literacy and numeracy skills, in order that they will be able to benefit fully from whatever other adult education programmes are available.

Over the years there have been several attempts both by Government and by Non-Governmental Organisations to organise adult education programmes. However few attempts have been made to ascertain how many people (women and men), of what ages are participating in which programmes. Even fewer attempts have been made to assess the extent to which these programmes are providing those who attend with appropriate and relevant knowledge and skills, or the extent to which they are meeting the needs of individual learners or of the society as a whole.

What is generally known is that on the whole more women than men participate in non-formal adult education programmes. With few exceptions however, these programmes have been designed to train women in traditional "female skills" and to reinforce their roles as mother and home-maker rather than to prepare them to understand and perform their multiple roles of worker, decision maker, manager, and citizen more efficiently and effectively. Consequently, it is not only desirable but essential

that some serious attempt be made to evaluate existing adult education programmes in which women now participate. It is important too, to develop and provide new programmes that are more relevant to the needs of women and to the society, and which will provide women with the knowledge and skills that they need to be better able to function, to contribute to, and benefit from the development of Grenada during the nineteen-nineties.

CHAPTER IV: WOMEN'S ACCESS TO AND USE OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND RESOURCES

If women are to play their rightful roles as equal partners with men and to participate equally with them in the development of the society and the nation, then they must have and enjoy good physical, mental and emotional health, they must be able to obtain available services and resources quickly and easily, and they must use these wisely.

Women's Health And Welfare

Traditionally women have been and still are the health providers and care givers in society. Their own health is fundamental and crucial to the health and well being of the entire society, and must be given proper consideration. It is therefore important that adequate health services be provided to ensure that a high standard of health is maintained among the female population.

According to statistics from the Ministry of Health, the leading cause of death among Grenadian women is Cerebrovascular diseases (Hypertension and Stroke). On average seventy (70) women died from these diseases each year between 1985-1987. Diabetes is the next highest cause of death among women and this is followed by cancer. Eleven women have been inflicted by the HIV/AIDS Virus. In addition to these major diseases, large numbers of women suffer from a variety of illnesses and ailments

like head aches and back aches, tiredness and fatigue, "worries", nervous tension, and emotional stress. Some of these may be the result of unstable and difficult living conditions and poor diet, but many more may be the result of lack of proper care and attention, insufficient support, and the absence of, or inadequate advisory, counselling and guidance services.

The need for services and mechanisms to provide and help women achieve and maintain their health and that of their families is crucial. Moreover, such services must be made available as near as possible to the communities in which women live. At the same time women must be educated so that they can make good use of the services that are available and can agitate for those that are not.

Child Bearing And Child Care

Records at the Ministry of Health show that approximately 30,000 women are of child bearing age and that the largest number of births has been to those between 20-24 years of age (1,011 births in 1987). Although teenage pregnancies still account for a significant number of birth (600 or 9% in 1987), there has been a steady decrease (from 23% in 1985 to 15% in 1989) in the number of births to women in their teens. There has also been a general decrease in the overall Birth Rate from 31% per 1,000 births in 1985 to 25.6% per 1,000 in 1988, and in the Still Birth Rate from 13.3% to 11.5% per 1,000 over the same period. The full responsibility that the majority of women have for child bearing

and child care is often a tremendous burden, especially as most women have to juggle child care with seeking paid employment or with income generating activities inside and outside of the home. If women are to be relieved from the former to be able to achieve some measure of financial stability and independence through the latter, adequate and affordable family planning and child care facilities are essential.

Women's Emotional Health

On the whole few attempts have been made either to provide services and support that help women to be able to cope with nervous tension, stress and emotional trauma; or to create mechanisms through which they can receive much needed advice and counselling on how to react to and deal with the many undesirable and painful experiences to which they may be subjected, e.g. domestic violence, rape, child abuse and sexual harassment on the job. Growing concern for the increase in violence against women has resulted in the formation of a Group of Concerned Women who are committed to providing some advice and support for abused women. At another level, the Department of Women's Affairs, in an attempt to cater to the emotional health needs of women, has made provision within its three-year programme to establish a Crisis Centre that will provide advisory and counselling services for women who need them.

Resources

Perhaps the resource that is in scarcest supply to women is money. This is particularly so for unemployed and low-income women who are heads of household and single mothers. Many of these women not only find it difficult to gain employment, but their lack of capital often prevents or limits their involvement in income-generating activities and small economic enterprises. Moreover it is virtually impossible for such women to get loans from established financial institutions like banks; and even when some special conditions are applied and special funds made available, the majority still do not qualify, often because they have no "collateral". This is so even though it is widely known and accepted by banks and other financial institutions that, on the whole, women have a better record of loan repayment than do men. Many lending practices clearly discriminate against women, and steps must be taken to ensure that Grenadian women do not continue to be discriminated against in this way.

CHAPTER V: WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

In Grenada as in most other countries, many more women participate in social than in political activities. Because of this although thousands of women are actively involved in a wide variety of activities from which they as individuals and from which the country as a whole benefit, only a very few women are involved in activities in which they are participating at the highest level of decision making or policy formulation. On the whole therefore, women are missing opportunities not only to shape and have some control of their own destiny, but to shape and give direction to the development of their country.

Political Activities

Politics have to do with power, and by and large, power and political power is still firmly in the hands of men. Politics continue to be dominated by men and most positions of power in the country, in parliament, in political parties and in the public and private sectors, are still held by men. The belief that women are afraid of politics and political power, and that they are unwilling to take public office and accept positions of authority is strong, and this belief is shared by men as well as by women. While it is true for instance that large numbers of women are members of, and strongly support political parties and vote, and that very, very few of these would consider pursuing a career in politics, or facing the polls; and while it is true too that several women have refused or

are unwilling to accept higher positions in public office, it is important to find out the reasons for this phenomena and for women's attitudes to the issues of politics and of power.

Moreover, it is essential to examine the societal structures and practices that have contributed to the creation, reinforcement and perpetuation of these existing beliefs and attitudes.

Over the last twenty years or so, more Grenadian women have become actively involved and prominent in the political affairs of the country, and through their valuable contributions have helped to shape and give direction to national development. The first of these was Dame Hilda Bynoe who served as the first female Governor from 1968-1974.

During the Revolutionary period, 1979-1983, many women began to participate more actively in politics and in political activities through their involvement in the National Women's Organisation (NWO) and through the policies and programmes of the Women's Desk (1979-1982) and later through the Ministry of Women's Affairs (1982-1983). The National Women's Organisation was a mass organisation whose membership was opened to all women in the country and as it mobilized and organised women in all of the parishes, its membership grew from 1,500 women in 47 groups in 1980 to 5,500 (21.5% of the female population) in 155 organised groups in 1981. Because the Government gave a substantial amount of authority to the NWO through its programmes

and activities, many women were provided with opportunities to play a more active role, to participate more fully, and to have a more direct influence on the political affairs of the country. This was reflected at one level by an increase in the number of women in leadership positions in the vanguard of the party - the New Jewel Movement (NJM) and in the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG), and by the large numbers of women who became engaged in the process of consultation about women's issues and about wider issues of national concern. During this period too the number of women appointed to the political office increased.

Among these were female ministers - the late Jacqueline Creft and Mrs. Phyllis Coard, an ambassador - Ms. Decima Williams and several female directors of public agencies, statutory bodies, and female advisors and technical officers.

Following the demise of the Revolution, all subsequent Governments have appointed at least one female minister. Among them have been Mrs. Joan Purcell - the present Minister of Women's Affairs, Mrs. Pauline Andrew and Mrs. Grace Duncan.

Within the present Government and Parliament there is not only a larger number of women than even before, but also a number of "firsts". Mrs. Margaret Neckles is the first female President of the Senate, Mrs. Winnifred Strachan is the first female Leader of the Opposition, and Mrs. Joan Purcell the first female to win an election for the seat to represent St. George's. In addition, more women are being given and accepting

positions of authority and leadership and through these are becoming more involved in policy and decision making as heads of public bodies. For example, the Chairpersons of GRENLEC and of the Board of Directors of the Grenada Bank of Commerce, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Senior Crown Counsel, and the President of the Trades Union Council are all women.

Visibility of a few women in positions of power and leadership is often seen and used by some to justify and continue the exclusion of larger numbers of women from such positions. However although a few women now occupy positions through which they can influence policy and decision making at the highest level, this is no guarantee that the position and condition of the majority of women will automatically change.

Women in leadership positions and in positions of power not only have the opportunity to bring a gender perspective to bear on all policies, decisions, plans and programmes, but they have a responsibility to use their positions to ensure that the decisions that are made and the strategies and mechanisms that are put in place to implement national policies and plans will result in a more equal distribution of resources and in more benefits to women in the country. To be able to do this effectively, these women must be sensitive to the concerns, needs and problems of women at all levels in the society, and they must also be sensitized to issues of gender. However, because the number of women in power and in leadership positions is still small, and because these women are so vulnerable, they need the support and the co-operation of all

women. In addition, more women must be willing to follow their example and to become more actively involved at all levels and in all types of political activity.

Social Activities

Throughout the years women have organised themselves and worked together to arrive at solutions to their problems, to help those in need, and to provide free of charge, a wide range of services to their communities. As a result thousands of women as members of women's groups, clubs and organisations are actively involved in a wide range and large number of social activities. However, women are not a homogeneous group, and women's organisations are as different as their members and their particular interests. Consequently the activities that various women's groups organise and become involved in differ widely, as do the issues that they emphasize, the focus of their work and those who benefit from their efforts. In Grenada the collective work of all women's groups and organisations, e.g., seminars, workshops, conferences, festivals, International Women's Day Celebrations, issuing of stamps, public debates, has provided opportunities for large numbers of women to share experiences to discuss their conditions and position, concerns and needs, to devise strategies and to develop plans for solving their problems and for improving their situation.

Traditional women's groups like the YWCA, church groups and local community groups have for years organised programmes and activities intended to improve the

social welfare of women, their health and nutrition, better living conditions, and the quality of family life and relationships. While they focus attention on the more needy and destitute, they have and continue to provide care, resources, and support for women of all walks of life.

In the last ten years or so, Local Development Agencies and Organisations like GRENSAVE, POPE PAUL'S CENTRE, ART and GRENCODA have made women the main focus and attention of their work. Through consciousness raising programmes, they have concentrated their energies and resources on increasing women's awareness about the important role that they play in the development of their communities and their country. Through education and training programmes they have helped women to build their self esteem and self confidence and to gain knowledge and skills to enhance their own development. In addition, these agencies have developed and implemented projects which have helped women to organise themselves, and to plan and implement activities to overcome their personal problems and to develop their communities. Through the efforts of these agencies too, numbers of women in rural communities have become more aware of themselves as women and of their role in community and national development.

Women's involvement in a wide range of social activities has also drawn the public's attention to and highlighted the relationships between women's issues and concern and the process and outcomes of national development.

CHAPTER VI: EQUALITY AND RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Probably the most important outcome of the UN Decade for Women is that it increased women's awareness, helped them to become more conscious, gave them greater confidence to articulate and discuss their experience of oppression and discrimination, and enabled them to better understand the reasons for their position of disadvantage. At the same time it resulted in the realization that meaningful national development was impossible if women did not have or were not given the opportunity to contribute to, participate in and benefit equally with men from development efforts. As a result individual women, groups of women and governments and non-governmental agencies have developed and implemented a variety of strategies and have put a number of mechanisms in place in order to promote and bring about equality for women and to protect and ensure women's rights.

In Grenada since 1975 several initiatives have been taken by successive governments and by women's groups and organisations to address the issues of oppression and discrimination against women. In 1975, the Government established a National Commission and gave it a mandate to determine the status of women in Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique. Subsequent governments have also taken initiatives to establish mechanisms through which they could address issues relating to women's role in the development of the country, deal with problems that affect how they are playing and could play their role more effectively, and ensure that women benefit

equally with their male counterparts from national development plans and programmes. The main strategy for accomplishing this has been the creation of National Machinery. At the same time successive governments have taken steps to promote and undertake law reform and change procedures and practices that effectively deny women their rights as human beings and as citizens.

National Machinery

Within the last twelve years various governments established National Machinery with the responsibility for dealing in concrete and practical ways with the concerns, problems and needs of women. This Machinery has taken many forms, has created a variety of mechanisms and at different times has emphasized and focused on different issues that affect women.

In June 1979, soon after the PRG came into power, a Women's Desk was established within the Ministry of Education and Social Affairs. Three years later in August 1982, a Ministry of Women's Affairs was created. Throughout the Revolutionary Period (1979-1983) emphasis was placed on ensuring women's rights and on promoting, encouraging and facilitating their active participation in the process of national development. Through its policies and programmes and in collaboration with the NWO, the Ministry attempted to strengthen women's organisations, to improve the social and economic status of women, and to implement policies and programmes for integrating

women more fully in national reconstruction and development, and to address some of the pressing concerns and problems facing women. For example, in 1979 a policy declaration for equal pay for women was implemented in some sectors and sanctions were introduced against sexual exploitation and blackmail of women by employers. In addition, efforts were made to upgrade the educational level of girls and women through provision of more scholarships and skills training, especially training for women in non-traditional skills

With the fall of the PRG in 1983, the Interim Government established a Division of Women's Affairs. Between 1984-1989, the Division of Women's Affairs was located in the Ministry of Health and it continued to undertake and sponsor programmes and activities that focused on and attempted to meet the needs of women in the country.

On its election to power in 1990, the present government, the National Democratic Congress, declared its commitment to formulating policies, putting mechanisms in place and implementing programmes to ensure that Grenadian women participate in and benefit equally from national development efforts with Grenadian men. Consequently it established a Department of Women's Affairs within the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Women's Affairs, and appointed a Senior Co-ordinator as Head of this Department.

The Department has developed and began to implement a comprehensive Three Year Programme (1991-1993) and a Plan of Action, and to create mechanisms and put

structures in place to achieve its goals. The main components of the Department's programmes are ADVOCACY, RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, SPECIAL PROJECTS, and INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING. The Department has begun a process of dialogue and consultation with women throughout the country so as to hear from them their concerns and problems, and their ideas and suggestions on how these might be dealt with. To date as part of a Public Education Programme, a number of Parish Workshops have been held and the media is being used to keep women and the population at large informed about the Department's work. In addition, a Household Survey on the Status of Women has been completed and the data is being analyzed. Included in the Department's plans is the establishment of a broad based National Commission on Women to advise the Minister and the Co-ordinator of the Department, and to be a link between the Department and women in the country.

Legal Reform

The rights of Grenadian women as well as the equality of the sexes are enshrined, recognised and guaranteed by the country's constitution. In spite of this however, women are overtly and covertly discriminated against by existing laws, mechanisms, procedures and practices and their discrimination is reinforced by the societal structures. It is therefore essential to study, review and reform existing laws that discriminate against women, to transform the structures, systems and procedures that keep women in a subordinate position, and to reverse the practices that oppress and put them at a disadvantage.

Some areas of law are of particular importance to women's situation and to ensure their rights and well-being. Among these are:-

- * Family Law - including Marriage and Divorce, Status of Children, Child Maintenance, Property Rights and Succession.*
- * Labour Law - including Maternity Leave and Benefits, Minimum Wages, Equal Pay, Sexual Harassment, Occupational Health and Safety.*
- * Criminal Law - including Rape, Carnal Knowledge of a female without her consent, and Domestic Violence.*

Over the last decade or so some attempts have been made both to reform laws that discriminate against women and to introduce laws that will ensure women's rights and enhance their position. The result has been some changes in some areas of The Law.

Family Law

Common Law Relationships

Although a significant number of Grenadian women are living in common law relationships, these relationships are not recognised as being legal. Implications of this

are several and they affect both family life and women's situation in important ways. For example, neither party in a common law relationship has any obligation to the other. In reality this means that women have no right to support and maintenance from their common-law husbands, neither have they any claims to the latter's property or assets. This is so even when women have contributed to the accumulation of property and other assets.

Status And Maintenance Of Children

The status of Grenadian Children is affected by common law relationships. Children of these relationships are regarded as "illegitimate", are discriminated against by the law and are stigmatized by the society. Discussion is taking place about a draft Status of the Children Act that would abolish distinctions between children born in and out of wedlock. At the same time many children and women suffer severe hardships because women do not have the means to maintain their children and because the children's father is either unable or unwilling to contribute to their upkeep. Even with the unrealistic legal minimum amount of EC\$7.00 per week for child maintenance many men do not pay, and because of the slowness of the court system most women see it as a waste of time to try to get them to do so.

Labour Law

Although there are fewer women than men in the labour force, there is need for special attention to be paid to laws and practices that discriminate against female workers. For example, in the agricultural sector there is no legislation or provision for minimum wages and neither is there any to ensure equal pay for equal work. Women do not have legal protection against sexual harassment in the work place and often because of their need to work to support their families and the scarcity of jobs, many women may feel that they have to "put up with" or accept undesirable and offensive overtures from male co-workers and employers.

One piece of legislation that women have benefitted from is the Maternity Leave Act of 1980, amended in 1989. Every female employee is not only entitled to three months maternity leave, but has the right to return to work at the end of the leave, moreover her employer cannot refuse to take her back. In addition, no employer can fire a pregnant woman because she is pregnant.

While several Acts - the Factories Act, Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act and Agricultural Workers Act - are in place to ensure the health and safety of workers, large numbers of women work in conditions that are unsafe and injurious to their health. This is especially so in cases where women have to work for long hours in ill-lighted, poor-ventilated factories and without proper clothing to protect them from chemicals, fumes and dust.

Criminal Law

Rape, Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence are dealt with under Criminal Law either as abuse against the person or as assault. In the case of rape, the Court usually takes the position that it is "dangerous to convict a man only on the victim's/woman's evidence". It is therefore necessary to obtain independent evidence. However because during rape cases it often seems that the woman/victim is on trial and because the resulting humiliation and embarrassment often proves too much for some women to endure, the majority of rape cases are not reported. In an attempt to address this problem, new provisions have recently been made for rape and related cases to be heard in camera.

There are still no laws that deal specifically with domestic violence, and the existing criminal law does not offer any special protection for women. As a result, large numbers of women and children continue to be victims of domestic violence without any effective mechanism to prevent or control it.

Women's Pressure Groups

Over the years individual women and women's groups have become more concerned about the problems confronting Grenadian women, about their rights and about equity and equality for women. These groups are not only articulating their views

on these issues more clearly, forcefully, and openly, but they have also begun to take some initiatives and action to address them.

Several women's groups have organised events, planned activities and implemented programmes to inform and educate women about equality and about their rights, and to draw the attention of the public and of policy-makers to the existence of many discriminatory laws and practices that work to women's disadvantage and that keep them oppressed. They also provide opportunities for women to come together and discuss their problems and issues of concern to them, to plan strategies and to take action to deal with them. In this way women's groups can and do serve as pressure groups to agitate for change in the conditions and situation of women.

For example, in 1979, the St. George's Progressive Women's Association organised a National Conference, which brought together a large number of women to identify some of the problems facing them and to search for solutions. On another level, the recently formed Group of Concerned Women for Progress have spoken out loudly against the increase in sexual crimes against women and about several other problems and adverse situations that are seriously affecting women and eroding their rights.

CHAPTER VII: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Existing research data reveal important facts and useful insights into the situation and condition of women in Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique. They also give some indication about the possible causes for some of the problems that Grenadian women face, and they highlight some of the initiatives that women have taken to improve their state and status.

Women constitute just over half of the total population of Grenada and head just under half of the households. More than half of the women who head households are unemployed, and most unemployed women are of child bearing age. At the same time, the majority of women who are employed are working for low wages in unskilled or semiskilled traditional female jobs in the service sector. This information suggests that the majority of women have a hard time and have great difficulty in meeting the everyday needs of their families. Since it is women who have the major responsibility for providing the basic needs of family members and for maintaining home and family life, their situation does affect and does have serious implications for the well-being of the entire population.

As women struggle to manage in trying circumstances, to juggle their multiple roles of mother, housewife, worker, bread winner, community worker and citizen, and to cope with discrimination, sexual harassment, violence and abuse, their own health and well-being are seriously affected. This in turn affects their ability to function effectively.

Some support services are available to women in Grenada, but on the whole these appear to be both inadequate and insufficient to meet the physical and emotional needs of the many women who need and who could benefit from them. An increase and improvement in the quality of existing child care, physical and mental health care, counselling, advisory and other services is critical, and these must be seen as essential to the well-being of the country and be given some priority.

A key factor in personal and national development is education. While the educational level of the entire population is fairly low, on the whole, Grenadian women are more educated than Grenadian men. More women have formal qualifications and larger numbers of women participate in adult and continuing education programmes than do men. In spite of this, so many more women are in lower positions and in low paying low status jobs, in a society in which people with education are highly regarded and in which education is seen to be a stepping stone to economic and social mobility.

One of the reasons for this is not only the type and content of education programmes in which women participate, but the curriculum choices and subject options on which they decide or which they are forced to take. A comprehensive review and reorientation of curricula and programme content within formal and non-formal education would help to ensure that girls and women are well equipped and prepared for the wide and diverse range of work that needs to be done in the country.

Over the last few years there has been a slow but gradual increase in the number of women in senior administrative and decision making positions in the public and private sectors. In order to accelerate and increase this trend, education programmes will have to be designed not only to equip more women for these positions, but to change people's and the society's attitude to and beliefs about women's place, position and status, and about the roles that they should play in the development of the country.

It is clear that there is now a greater level of awareness among women themselves and among the population as a whole about women's situation and condition. There is also much more understanding about some of the reasons for women's plight and some acknowledgement of the need to attempt to change the existing situation. Because of this new awareness, there has been an increase in dialogue and discussion, and of initiative and specific action with and by women, governments and non-governmental organisations on issues concerning women. These have led to exploration and experimentation with a variety of strategies, mechanisms, programmes and activities designed to bring about meaningful change and to benefit women.

The process of dialogue and discussion with women that began in the late seventies, intensified in the early eighties and reactivated in the nineties must be extended and continued. This is necessary to ensue that as many women as possible have an opportunity to make their voices heard and to be actively involved in making decisions that will influence and affect their lives. At the same time, a parallel process

of on-going dialogue and consultation with policy-makers, decision makers and planners must be initiated. This is crucial because many of these still appear reluctant to acknowledge women's perspective about women's experience and reality. Many also find it difficult to accept that this perspective must influence their policies and decisions, and several have displayed an unwillingness to use data about women's lives to inform their plans and programmes. Because of this, even though there is some hard and valid data on the lives and situation of Grenadian women, this has not been widely used to inform or influence national development policies and plans in any significant way. This is one reason why so many of the macro plans and policies have such negative and adverse effects on women's lives and so many undesirable outcomes on the development of the country.

At the same time, there is still need for on-going research activities of varying types in order to continually update and expand the existing data base on women in Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique. Equally important is the dissemination of information generated by the research to a wide cross section of individuals and groups at all levels of Grenadian Society.

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